

CLAIMS:

1. A multiple access communication system comprising at least one primary station (2) and a plurality of secondary stations (32, 34, 36), the primary station (2) and the secondary stations (32, 34, 36) being interconnected via a network, the secondary stations (32, 34, 36) being arranged for transmitting return signals in a return signal frequency band to the primary station (2), the secondary stations (32, 34, 36) being further arranged for transmitting the return signals in only a part of the return signal frequency band containing relatively little noise, characterized in that the network comprises means (40) for mapping the return signals onto the return signal frequency band.

2. A multiple access communication system according to Claim 1, characterized in that the means (40) for mapping the return signals are located in a part of the network where relatively little noise occurs.

3. A multiple access communication system according to Claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that the part of the return signal frequency band is an upper part of the return channel band, the means (40) for mapping the return signals comprising a down converter (48, 50) for down converting the frequency of at least one of the return signals.

4. A multiple access communication system according to Claim 3, characterized in that the down converter (48, 50) comprises a block down converter.

5. A multiple access communication system according to ~~any one of the Claims 1 to 4~~, characterized in that the network comprises a coaxial cable network.

6. A multiple access communication system according to ~~any one of the Claims 1 to 5~~, characterized in that the network comprises a hybrid fiber/coax network.

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Claim 1